

'Wonder Woman' leaping snowbanks in South Tahoe

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Carol Crosby-Ferges Christensen fearlessly lay her body across the windshield of a moving car. She jumped through a ceiling and in and out of trees. She even leaped between tall buildings in a single bound.

No surprise. She was Wonder Woman, after all, or rather a stunt double for actress Lynda Carter, who starred in the late-1970s TV series.

Now 64, Christensen has lived at Kelly Ridge in South Lake Tahoe since it opened in 2009.



Carol Crosby-Ferges Christensen

How did she come to stand in for a superhero strong enough to lasso a plane, hurl a spaceship or single-handedly snatch someone away from an oncoming tsunami? It seems she was born for the part.

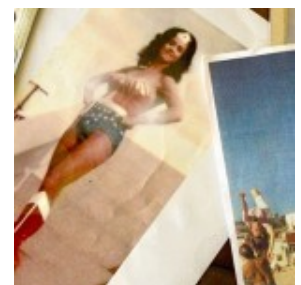
Christensen grew up in a family of acrobats and gymnasts and recalls they "had a trampoline in the backyard since before I could walk."

When she was 6 or 7, she started performing with her parents and siblings as a family act in Muscle Beach near her hometown of Playa del Rey in Southern California. They did gymnastics and tumbling, and their signature act was a human pyramid.

“Dad would be standing and his feet would be the only two on the ground,” she says. “My twin brother and my older sister would be on their knees on his two legs, my mom would be sitting on his shoulders, I’d be sitting on her shoulders, and my little brother would be in front.”

All except her dad joined her in spending several summers touring the West Coast with a one-ring tent show called The DeWayne Circus.

“That’s a kid’s dream,” Christensen says. “We did not only the trapeze and the trampoline and the gymnastic, acrobatic things we were used to doing already, but we also did acts with ponies and an elephant.”



Memorabilia of
Carol Crosby-
Ferges
Christensen's
days as Wonder
Woman.
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By the time she was 20, she had gotten to know a number of celebrities – Liza Minnelli was her best friend when she was a child – and through these connections, she started doing stunt

work for TV shows, movies and commercials.

“I never had to go on one interview or scratch my way in to get a job,” Christensen says. “They always called and said, ‘Here’s something we need somebody for.’”

Her first movie gig was as Sharon Tate’s double in a film that also starred Tony Curtis. She later performed on the TV show “The Mod Squad,” in the movie “Brewster’s Millions,” and in other movies with such stars as Julie Andrews, Gene Wilder and Dom DeLuise.

When Lynda Carter’s original stunt double, Kathy Lee, was injured, Christensen stepped in. She was one of five called on to do stunts for Carter, and she says modestly that whenever she thought somebody could do a stunt better than she could herself, she would let them.

“I was never frightened, I never have been,” she says. Still, recalling her most challenging stunt does give her pause these days.

“There were 18-story buildings on the studio lot, fairly high, and I had to jump from one building to the other with no net, nothing down below. I used a mini-trampoline. I had to run and jump off that to the other building with no safety belt. I don’t even know why I did that one.”